

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) A fuel cell system comprising:

a fuel cell for generating power by circulating a fuel gas;

a fuel gas supply source for supplying said fuel gas to said fuel cell;

a circulation route for circulating the fuel gas supplied to said fuel cell;

drive means provided in said circulation route and serving to circulate said fuel gas;

pressure regulating means provided between said fuel gas supply source and said circulation route and serving to regulate the pressure of the fuel gas in said circulation route to a predetermined pressure; and

control means for controlling a drive quantity of said drive means and variably regulating said pressure regulating means, wherein

said control means makes up a deficiency of said fuel gas according to a variation of a required gas quantity required in said fuel cell by regulating a pressure of the fuel gas in said circulation route with said pressure regulating means, while inhibiting a variation of said drive quantity in said drive means.

10. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein said pressure regulating means raises the pressure of the fuel gas in said circulation route according to the increase in a required gas quantity that is required in said fuel cell.

11. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein

in a region in which at least the required gas quantity is higher than a standard value, the pressure regulation quantity of said pressure regulating means is varied correspondingly to a variation of said required gas quantity.

12. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein in a region where said required gas quantity is higher than a standard value, a variation rate of the drive quantity of said drive means is reduced with respect to that of a region where said required gas quantity is lower than said standard value.

13. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein in a region where said required gas quantity is lower than a standard value, ~~the a~~ pressure regulation quantity of said pressure regulating means is maintained equal to or less than a constant value.

14. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein said drive means is controlled based on said required gas quantity and a measured value of pressure inside said circulation route.

15. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, further comprising

means for determining a drive characteristic of said drive means based on a generated power required for said fuel cell; and

means for determining ~~the a~~ pressure regulation quantity provided by said pressure regulating means based on said drive characteristic, which is set.

16. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein in a region in which at least the required gas quantity is higher than a standard value, a drive quantity of said drive means is suppressed and a pressure regulation quantity of said pressure regulating means is varied so as to make up the deficiency of the drive quantity of said drive means.

17. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein a pressure of said pressure regulating means can be regulated correspondingly to a variation of an air pressure controlled by opening and closing a pair of shut-off valves.

18. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein said drive means is ~~any one from among~~ a pump, a compressor, ~~and or~~ a turbine.

19. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein said fuel gas supply source is a hydrogen tank filled with hydrogen.

20. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein in a region in which at least the required gas quantity is higher than a standard value, a pressure regulation quantity of said pressure regulating means is varied monotonously.

21. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein a pressure regulation quantity of said pressure regulating means is varied continuously and gradually from a region in which at least the required gas quantity is equal to or lower than a standard value to a region in which at least the required gas quantity is higher than said standard value.

22. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 9~~claim 8~~, wherein both a drive quantity of said drive means and a pressure regulation quantity of said pressure regulating means are varied in a region in which at least the required gas quantity is higher than a standard value.

23. (Withdrawn) A drive method for a fuel cell system equipped with a fuel cell for generating power by circulating a fuel gas, the drive method comprising the steps of:

estimating a required gas quantity required in said fuel cell; and

making up a deficiency of said fuel gas according to a variation of said required gas quantity, which is estimated, by regulating a pressure of the fuel gas in a circulation route, in which the fuel gas supplied to said fuel cell is circulated, while inhibiting a variation of the drive quantity for circulating said fuel gas.